

Holy Family School, Parkes

- Leaders
Transforming
Learning and
Learners
- Mid-Point Meeting –
24th May, 2010



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"They've all tested positive for stress."

What did we set out to do?

- As a staff group, we identified 'red areas' within our school – areas which needed an intense focus



Red Areas

- Efficiency
- Community
- Professional Development
- Excellence
- Catholicity

Making a Difference

- Working together as a team for a shared moral purpose and for the common good
- Shared leadership
- LTLL a regular staff meeting agenda item
- Authentic learning

Why?

- We were guided through a process (LTLL) as a staff group where we recognised it was necessary to address specific areas of need within our school
- We want all staff to be active contributors to the educative leadership of the school
- We want to transform learners and learning
- We want shared leadership and responsibility at HFS
- We want our school to be the best it can be

What have we done?

- The initial LTLL gathering allowed staff to meet in small groups to identify 'red areas' within our school.
- Staff identified beliefs based on our professional understandings.
- As a whole group, we shared our beliefs.

- Goals were set
- LTLL is regularly addressed at staff meetings, stage meetings, team meetings, parent meetings, professional conversations and executive meetings

LTLL in action at HFS

EFFICIENCY

- Sequence of Learning-Scope and Sequence for Reading, Writing and Spelling- on the school server for easy access.

- Sequence of Learning for English-Reading, Writing and Spelling has everyone following a common goal and has lead to a more thorough approach to organising levels thereby reducing 'gaps' in learning

- Our Pastoral Care System has been modified to ensure a positive approach towards Catholicity, Justice, Transformation and the Common Good.



- Class profiles for English will be included in the Class Term Program. A 'First Steps Class Profile' column on each Supervisor's checklist
- Staff conversations and discussions happen at Staff Meetings as well as Stage Meetings (which are more regularly planned)

- Teacher Assistant Time-Optimum use of TA time has been initiated. A more focused approach has been adopted on facilitating specific targeted programs for the children that have been identified through the Smart Data Analysis.
- Programs all reflect evidence of First Steps- Indicating a *Common Purpose*



- Commencement of '***Uninterrupted Teaching/Learning Time***'- no announcements over the PA system until just before recess, lunch or dismissal at the end of the day, unless it is an emergency.

- Plan to use parent helpers more efficiently- guidelines on how to manage/lead Reading Groups Activities: Activity Cards and Parent Workshops (**Kathy gave a Parent Workshop on Open Day during Catholic Schools Week**)



- Team Teaching- Using other teachers' strengths in their areas of expertise/experience and sharing knowledge
- National Partnerships Planning Day for teachers- Programs, resources etc

- Indigenous Literature displayed in the library to encourage more regular use in the classrooms for reading activities



- Literacy Awareness throughout the school- Newsletter articles
- Book Reviews by students/Reading Quotations)
- Parent information pamphlets,
- Posters around the school,

- Book Club-Fridays
1:30-1:55
- Reading quote
displayed on the
main school
noticeboard at the
front of the school



- Boys Club-once a week



- Fruit Time incorporated into the morning session- to encourage healthy eating habits



- Library-
 - *Purchase of books to suit our current need – Boys' Education



- * Record of borrowing throughout the school to keep a track of increased/decreased borrowing.

COMMUNITY

- The staff had many positive things to say about the community spirit at Holy Family.

- We were happy to report good student numbers at community events- ANZAC March and Parish Masses.



- Many parents attended Kathy's Information Session on reading on Open Day during Catholic Schools Week. Parents were very appreciative.

- There have been many positive reports from parents about Holy Family School.



- Parent Helpers Morning Tea- Held at the end of every year to thank parents for their support in the classroom.



- Lyn at the canteen organises a Canteen Helpers Lunch at the end of every year to show her appreciation. There is always a congenial atmosphere in the canteen when you walk in.

- P&F are a positive group of parents who are doing wonderful things for the school.
- The teachers take active roles in weekend Parish Masses.
- The teachers have a Touch Footy team and a few go for dance classes/gym together and this has been observed by people in the wider community in a very positive light.

- Staff birthdays- Birthdays are acknowledged and celebrated with our Birthday Buddy system.
- The staff are always willing to take up managerial roles for Diocesan sport



- Staff members in specialist roles support staff from surrounding schools
- The staff come together to help/attend at various community events such as Performing Arts Festival, Parkes Show stall and Carols by Candlelight



- Newspaper articles/Parish Newsletter/School Website - News is shared in the community about what has been happening at the school.
- Inclusiveness – Parents are invited to classrooms to share their expert knowledge and culture for special units of work



- Parish Children's Masses- Every term the children participate in a Parish Mass.



- Boys' Club/Book Club/Toy Areas in the playground help all children fit in. These special provisions are aimed at those children who are finding it difficult to adjust socially in the school playground thereby creating an environment of comfort and safety to all.

- Buddies program- This Buddy System works very well as there is no element of threat for the little ones when they come into school. The bigger children are actually their buddies! Less bullying occurs as the older buddies are very protective.



- School's open-door policy- Encourages parents to come forward with any problems/grievances.
- Meetings with parents to discuss their child's progress happens regularly with learning support team and parents.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- The staff noted that our Professional Development is based on the needs of our school- where the situation requires, for example Anaphylaxis, Autism, etc.

- First Steps training is ongoing and teachers revisit different components of the program at various staff meetings in their evaluations/discussions
- New teachers have been trained to use First Steps



- Musica-Viva in-service is attended regularly by 1 or 2 staff members and the information is shared at staff meetings
- The Diocesan Office has expressed a willingness to support requests for in-services on specific subjects

- Compulsory qualifications are up-to-date, such as First Aid, Child Protection, Asthma, Diabetes etc.
- Staff in-service each other in school, regularly at staff meetings, such as First Steps, IT-Active board, etc.



- Religious Education: In-service/Staff Spiritual Development every year.
- Teacher resources-websites, books, ideas are passed around/shared.
- Teacher Assistants are trained internally by staff members to ensure valuable input in the classroom programs and the special targeted programs for children as required in each class.

- Indigenous Perspective- Our AEWs, Robin and Aleria have shared their Indigenous culture with all the classes in order to gain an insight into Indigenous Literature- this in turn helps the students to comprehend various Indigenous stories in relation to our All-School Comprehension Focus.



Challenges

- Time management
- Fitting all items on staff meeting agendas – what is the best way to make this a priority?
- Communication with all staff members

Learnings

- Connecting all staff members to a project gives ownership with results
- The identification of the areas has led to professional discussions and a deeper understanding of striving to achieve our goals
- Self-assessment leads to authentic learning

Questions we still have...

- How do we maintain LTLL once all areas have been covered?
- Once the funding for our lead teacher expires, how do we maintain a teacher in this important role?
- Will there be a similar process available to us in the future to identify new goals?

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"My objective is to have each student become more insightful, compassionate, introspective, and empathetic. In your case I will settle for quiet."